

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-22 are pending. Claim 17 is amended.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 and 103

Claims 1, 7, 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC 102(a) as anticipated by Ryan (US 6,766,027). Claims 2-6, 8-16, 18 and 20-22 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Ryan. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Briefly stated, the present invention provides a loudspeaker assembly with an integrated woofer frame and baffle component wherein the woofer frame is created as an integral part of the baffle by molding the woofer frame and the baffle as a unitary component. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawings, a speaker assembly 2 comprises a baffle 4, a tweeter assembly 6 which is mounted on baffle 4 and which includes a high frequency transducer 10, and a woofer assembly 9 which includes a low frequency transducer 40. In accordance with the invention, woofer assembly 9 has a woofer frame 8 which is integrally formed with baffle 4. This provides various advantages in terms of acoustical quality as well as the ability to incorporate a woofer assembly of given size within a speaker assembly 2 of limited size.

In contrast, Ryan describes a speaker system which does not have a woofer frame created as an integral part of the baffle by molding the woofer frame and baffle as a unitary component. Rather, the speaker system of Ryan has a woofer which is separate from and is simply mounted on or secured to the speaker frame. As set forth in lines 22-26 of column 3 of Ryan, the woofer 15 is “secured to speaker frame or bracket 17” (line 24). As described in column 3 at lines 32-37, the “speaker frame 17 defines egg shaped front or inner surface 43 and a rear surface 41, through which speakers 47, 49 are formed to receive the tweeter/ midrange module 13 and woofer 15, respectively”. Thus, Ryan’s woofer 15 is received within an aperture 49 in speaker frame 17. Woofer 15 does not have a frame created as an integral part of

the baffle (frame) by molding the woofer frame and baffle as a unitary component, as in the case of the present invention. As described at lines 57-62 of column 4 of Ryan, the woofer speaker which is in a fixed orientation relative to the speaker frame can be mounted in pivoting fashion, further suggesting that creation of the woofer frame as an integral part of the baffle by molding the woofer frame and baffle as a unitary component would be contrary to the intent of Ryan, which is to provide a speaker system having speakers of variable orientation.

Page 2, paragraph 2, of the Office Action states that “Ryan teaches a loudspeaker assembly that comprises a baffle (17, 19)”. However, Ryan defines 19 as a baffle and 17 as a frame or bracket. Later in this sentence, there is reference to “a woofer assembly (15, 49, Figure 1, 3, 4, 5)”. However, 49 is defined in Ryan as an aperture in the speaker frame 17 in which the woofer is mounted. The following sentence states “As shown in Figures 1 and 5, the woofer assembly is mounted within the woofer frame”. Again, however, nothing in Ryan shows or suggests that the woofer frame is an integral part of frame 17 or baffle 19. As noted above, woofer 15 is mounted in an aperture 49 in frame 17, as described at lines 31-35 of column 3 of Ryan.

Applicant's claims include limitations to these distinguishing features. Independent claims 1, 8 and 14, as filed, recite that the “woofer frame is an integral part of said baffle”. Independent claim 17 is amended to recite that the woofer frame and baffle are integrally formed. Since Ryan does not include each and every feature of claims 1, 8, 14 and 17, it cannot anticipate those claims or claims 2-7, 9-13, 15, 16 and 18-22 dependent thereon.

Moreover, the dependent claims include additional distinguishing features. Claims 5, 12, 16 and 18 recite that the woofer frame “is created as an integral part of the baffle by molding the woofer frame and the baffle as a unitary component”. Claims 7, 13 and 15 recite that the non-metallic baffle “is reinforced to reduce flex”. Regarding this limitation, the Action states in paragraph 2 that “Ryan teaches the non-metallic baffle that is reinforced as claimed (Figures 1, 3 and column 4, lines

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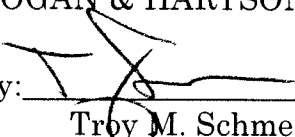
1-9)". However, nowhere in lines 1-9 of column 4 is there any discussion or suggestion of reinforcing the baffle.

Conclusion

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after entry of this amendment. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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